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# THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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quarter of the city where many Jews live  
disheveled - ruffled

# Out of My Life and Thoughts

DANIEL COHEN

Rhetoric 102, Theme 12

Thomas Jefferson, Brooklyn

## The Ghetto

ASK ANYONE IN BROOKLYN WHERE BROWNSVILLE IS and they'll tell you to go to Pitken Avenue. Pitken Avenue is easiest to find at night. That's when all of the neon lights are ablaze and the street looks like a miniature Times Square. The side streets are all dark. The tenements are always dark, and the people seem to feel this darkness. Like moths they flock to the neon lights of the main street or the less attractive electric bulbs of the candy stores that periodically illuminate the solid front of tenements. A bus runs along Pitken Avenue with its bulging load of tired, disheveled garment workers. The workers fall against each other with each lurch of the bus. In their hands they clutch newspapers that have been read, reread and will be read again. The lifeless eyes speak of the monotony of the days that have passed and those which are yet to come. At each street the bus discharges its load and rumbles on to the next corner.

In summer everyone takes his chair and sits out in the street to gossip, talk about baseball, pitch pennies and drink Pepsi-Cola. Some of us tried to escape the city, but Prospect Park was packed with people and Coney Island didn't have an empty patch of sand to lie down on. We went instead to the air-conditioned movies and in the darkness escaped the world.

## Georgia

I know it's 6:00 A.M. because the guy on my right has just switched on his radio and "I'm Alabamy Bound" is pouring out of its speaker. The guy on my left yells, "Whoops, late again" and hastily turns on the same program. In ten minutes the sergeant will be down the aisles mumbling his perpetual slogan of "Let's go men. Let's go." At that point my buddy Johnny Bauer across the aisle will turn over on his other side. This was his one gesture of rebellion against the army, and he made a ritual of it. The sergeant seemed to sense this and would inevitably return to tip him out. This morning, however, Johnny and the rest of us got up without a fight, for it was Sunday and we would be going to town. All week long we lived for the moment when we could leave the sandy, treeless, barracks-filled, uniformed camp and hop the bus to town. (What we wouldn't do to take that bus to the end of the world and leave behind us the crushing machine that had conquered us.) Nervously we entered the office for our passes. Was the "old man" in a good humor, or had he found some job that couldn't wait and was looking for "volunteers"? The "old man" smiles. God bless him, we're free! The bus takes us into the center of town, Five Points. We get off and look at the shops all filled with

non-uniform clothes. The sun is hot, but the girls dressed in cottons look fresh. We see some old people and some children and it's wonderful to know that the whole world isn't in the army. We decide to take a bus to see some of Johnny's girl friends. The bus is crowded in front but empty in the rear. We go to the empty seats in the rear and sit down. The people in the front silently glare at us, and the bus driver turns around in his seat to stare at us. The few people in the back of the bus anxiously gaze out of the windows pretending not to notice. We had seated ourselves in the part of the bus reserved for Negroes. I let Johnny go on to the girls alone, and I went back to camp.

### Galilee (Province of Palestine)

Dawn is always beautiful at Sasa, for from our hilltop we can see the sun rise out of the Arabian desert, quickly shake the sand from its shoulders, and soar into the heavens. I hurry to the mule shed and feed and harness a team. Before long they are hitched to the wagon, and, after breakfasting, we are off to the fields. The trip down is always a dangerous one, for the road is very steep and the mules are unable to maintain their footing on the smooth pavement. They usually try to pull the wagon off onto the shoulders where it is soft. The shoulders, however, are narrow and beyond them is a sheer drop of many yards. The trip down is always a battle full of eloquent threats in order to keep the animals on the road. None of the other members of the crew ever make the trip down with me. They prefer to walk the mile or so to the fields. At the end of the day, however, they take the wagon back. The field is, as usual, full of stones, and we will spend the day picking up stones by hand, putting them into rubber baskets, loading them on the wagon, and dumping them at the edge of the field. Our months of work can be seen in the rows of stones that line each finished field. Each man knows his job, and the routine we have established works efficiently. We work in silence. The sun grows hot, and the desert winds bring little respite from the heat. Our back and arms begin to ache from the constant labor, and the sun seems to sear its way into our heads. It is noon and we walk to the shade of a nearby fig tree to eat our lunch. Lying beneath the tree, we look up and see the village at the top of the hill. The new, corrugated metal roofs reflect the sun, and we can hear the sounds of life coming from its buildings. On the hillside beside it we can see the figures of the forestry crew planting trees. We look at the little patch they have finished and the many hills that are yet to be done. We look at the few fields we have finished and the many fields we have yet to do. We look at those few shining roofs in the midst of all of the desolation and we wonder.

### Home

Each time I return to New York, it's the same. "By God," I think, "it hasn't changed." I felt that way when I arrived after being discharged from the army. Walking down the streets, listening to people, looking at the shops,

riding the subways, I knew that the city hadn't changed. London had changed. Paris and Berlin had changed. Things had happened to those cities. Things outside of those cities had made themselves felt. The way of life was different. New York had only superficially experienced the war, and it was disappointing for me to realize that. Somehow you want your city to grow with you. You realize that unless it does you are cut off from your neighbors by what you have seen and done. There is no greater loneliness than being alone in a big city. What right do they have to live as usual after all that has happened?

My second homecoming was no different. The city remained the same. The people looked at me as they had always looked at me and listened with the ears of good listeners. I knew they were deaf. "They listen but they hear not." To whom could I tell of what I had learned? "Isn't it great to be back?" they asked. The styles have changed, but the tastes remain the same. The subway still stops at the same stations and the same people get on. I cross the paths of my own existence in the city and hurry on for there is a train to catch to new places and new growth.

Impressionism - desire for escape from monotony - desire for change, growth

## The Corn Will Grow Without Me

CAROL DORNFELD

Rhetoric 101, Theme 3

TO WATCH THE LIFE CYCLE OF A FIELD OF CORN IS TO watch the life cycle of man, set in green leaves and rustling stalks.

See for yourself. First the field is barren, but the earth is rich and full of latent power to produce. The seeds are sown, and soon the tiny green shoots appear—shy, simple, and beautiful. They grow to scrawny adolescence and their few leaves stick out at awkward angles. The plants grow taller. In youth they are strong and lovely, yet they are still not ready for the business of reproduction. But at last they have stretched to their uttermost height, and their long glossy leaves are richly green. It takes little time after the tassels bloom for the corn to begin forming. Now is the fullest period in the life of each cornstalk in the field. Their leaves whisper together in the wind, and they bear the ever-growing ears with evident pride. At last it is time for harvest when all of them will be forcibly separated from their progeny, and they will stand, shorn and bereft. For a while they try to carry on. But their purpose in life is over. Slowly at first, then more quickly, they droop and wither and dry, and finally die.

\* \* \*

When I was young, I used to believe that by carefully watching over my little cornpatch, I could help it grow. By keeping the weeds from encroaching on the earth around the corn and by loosening the soil, I would promote the chronological order is not definite. The spatial order lacks transition. What exactly was this job in Sasa?

Impressionism - selection of detail to create a mood, a feeling. The reason, understatement - here we have a common feeling. Because it is common, it may be common, but because it is common it is important.

growth of the corn. Yet, somehow in places where the soil was better than that in my plot, corn would grow better unattended by me. Finally, one time someone else took over my corn-patch when I was ill, and I discovered that my pet corn, which would grow only under my loving hands, flourished without me.

Later on in life, I began to think that I must someday be great. Someday I must show the people what was wrong and set them straight. But now I realize that I am ordinary, common, one of many in many different groups. Others are much greater than I can ever hope to be. I am weak. I am small. My great ideas are narrow in reality. I am no Baruch, Stravinsky, or Marshall. The people will be born, have their first impressions, grow older, older, and yet older, passing through youth and maturity, when their young will be snatched away by Nature. The people will grow old and wither and die. And nothing I do or ever will do will influence them. They will go on.

They—and the corn—will grow without me.

## Molly

ANNE MARTIN

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 12*

WE HAD A COW. EVEN TO THE ORDINARY FARMERS she would have seemed a strange animal in the biological sense. She ate at least two bales of hay per day; most cows eat only one, especially if they are the small Guernsey type. She gave milk for two years after the last calf had been born—a very strange accomplishment biologically.

However, we were not ordinary farmers interested in amazing feats of a seven-year-old family cow. We were interested in and continued to support Molly only because of her personal characteristics. And these were many and astonishing.

She had powers of observation. Never would she budge from her vantage point over the pasture without first surveying the yard, the house, the pasture, and the surrounding farms. If a piece of paper had blown from one side of the field to another, she stopped, gazed thoughtfully, and moved majestically over for a nasal investigation. If a strange car had parked in the barnyard, she sauntered casually around within the area until the driver appeared. Perhaps this constant surveillance over her domain accounted for the enormous appetite she still retained when she retired to the cow-cafeteria.

Retired is the proper term. Never was this cow incarcerated in a stanchion. If she chose to heed the noisy rattle of a pail from the other end of the pasture, she would gallop to the barn and plunge into the food with rough

slaps of her tongue. On the other hand, if she chose to heed rather her dis-taste for human domination, she was impervious to any incentive.

We were at a loss to account for the dominating character of our cow. We played with the thought that because we were only women, she recognized her basic superiority and used us with contempt. Her original docility when delivered by three massive farm-hands and her subsequent subservience in the hands of men bore this out. Yet, we preferred to ascribe her differences to a fundamental intelligence unknown to previous cows. Her answering moo whenever we called to her, whether she intended to obey or not, convinced us this assumption was true.

Any doubt on the question of her mental powers, and our own feebleness, was alleviated by our results in presenting our Molly to the bull. Cows be-come quite violent when feeling that way, and we were sorely distressed. We had heard violent tales of horrible fates met by those who lead their cow to the bull.

First we tied her to the car and drove off. She tore the bumper off the car. Then we formed a triangle with the car racing in front and the others tearing down the road beside her—or at least within sight of Molly. Women and children in the neighboring houses peered from second story windows for a mile and a half; men snatched their frightened dogs (Molly had a ter-rible animosity for dogs) and barricaded the front doors.

Unfortunately, in our amateurish efforts, we did not realize that the fact that Molly proceeded home in much the same fashion indicated an incompetent job on the part of the bull. When this fact did penetrate, we were encouraged by the fact that our constant perusal of the agricultural bulletins indicated that this bull had been of inferior quality anyway.

As Molly's cycle evolved, the time came when she decided to dispense with our ignorant efforts and take the problem into her own hands. The fact that she chose to take her trip to the bull on a frozen January morning via flights over five barb-wire fences and a frozen stream did not bother her. Neither did our uncomfortable efforts of the next soggy, muddy day disturb her as we returned her to her throne.

We were thrilled at Molly's discretion. She had chosen a hitherto un-known progenitor, a short-horn bull of massive proportions. When she did us the service of presenting a blue-eyed calf with his build and her brains, we were doubly convinced of our Molly's superior qualities. True, after the birth of Monty, she still refused to grant more than a pitiful gallon of milk per day, but he was such a darling prince that we forgave her completely.

As a postscript to this story, though we had hoped that Molly's peculiari-ties were due in part to her solitary existence, and that her role as queen-mother would relieve us of some of her idiosyncrasies, we were wrong as usual. Instead of one cow to leap across the fence into the peas (carefully refraining from stepping on the scattered squashes as would any conservative

owner), we now had two. Two pairs of haughty, inquisitive eyes now observed every pail of chicken feed which was transported and all the traveling salesmen who visited.

Our love for Molly's appetite overcame our appreciation of Monty, her son, and we sold her successor. We were sorry, but Molly had to eat to maintain herself. If she would refuse to do so in the pasture as a proper cow, her son had to be sacrificed to foot the bill.

## Freedom is Everybody's Job

MANUEL REINES

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 10*

THE YEAR WAS 1937. ADOLPH HITLER HAD TAKEN control of the German Reich and had already managed to "whip" the League of Nations. His goose-stepping Storm Troopers had marched into the Rhineland. Messerschmitt was busy building the finest, most destructive fighter planes ever devised. The German people were enjoying the benefits of their dictatorship. "Guns, not butter!" was the motto in Germany. Konrad Henlein was instigating discontent, race hatred, and revolt among the Germans in the Sudeten. In Austria the Nazis were actively undermining the existing government. Peace-loving nations were being devoured by power-hungry dictators; peace-loving people were being slaughtered because of their religion,—killed because of their beliefs—murdered because they simply wanted to live as honest, decent, free people. The whole of Europe was in a turmoil—a turmoil that was to spread like a monstrous octopus, engulfing freedom-loving people wherever its ugly, slimy tentacles could reach.

Where was I while all this was going on? I was right in the middle of it, on a train one hundred miles out of Berlin headed toward the French frontier. My parents had taken my sister to Europe for medical purposes, and we were returning from Rumania where we had visited my grandparents.

I was a brat; I suppose most children are at that age. During my stay in Rumania I had learned to speak the Jewish language quite well. But I preferred to speak Spanish, my native tongue, simply because my mother would have liked me to speak Jewish to her parents. The only time my mouth would emit a Jewish phrase would be when my parents would have preferred a Spanish phrase. This was one of those times.

In 1937 trains were not quite what they are today. A first-class accommodation was no better than the accommodation received on a "Student Special" to Chicago—and just as crowded. My father was waiting for us in France, and my mother, sister, and I were alone in the train. Sitting directly across from us was a young Nazi Officer. I was much impressed by his well-cut

uniform, and while I sat there admiring his shiny buttons, medals, and gun holster, my mother and he were engaged in pleasant conversation. Then it happened. Frankly, I cannot remember the beginning of the incident, but to this day my mother has never quite figured out why I did it. Right there, with the Nazi Officer in front of us, and a carload of other Nazis all around us, I began to rattle off a steady stream of Jewish to my mother.

The officer turned pale. He had been speaking to a Jew in public. Immediately he stood up and proceeded to curse at and insult my mother, amidst the cheers of the other Nazis in the car. Looking up at his huge figure hovering over us like a storm cloud, I was terrified. My baby sister burst into a fit of convulsive shrieks. The yelling of the crowd became intolerable. My mother's face became red as anger forced the blood into her head. She leaped out of her seat and screamed at the top of her voice, "Yes, I am a Jew—but I am a Colombian Jew. In my country we treat you Germans as decent human beings, though you don't deserve it, and when I travel through Germany I expect to be treated with the same courtesy afforded any other foreigner. You can be sure that the Colombian Embassy in Berlin will hear of this tomorrow."

These last few words did the trick, for the Nazi Officer immediately stilled the crowd, and after apologizing sincerely to my mother, passed a petition around which stated that he had merely been acting in the line of duty. Obviously this great "Superman" was not the "Superman" Hitler claimed him to be, or this officer would have realized that the Colombian Embassy did not carry much weight in politics. This, however, is not the point. To the end of my life I shall not be able to eradicate the impression that this incident left upon my mind—the Nazi's face, my sister's shrieks, the cheers of the crowd, and my mother's screams.

It was because of this incident, and others like it, which I have witnessed, that I appreciate the freedom under which I live. If I were to ask you, "Which do you prefer, a totalitarian system, or a democratic system," I am sure that without hesitating you would reply, "A democratic system, of course." But why do you prefer democracy? Why do you prefer living in the United States to living in Russia? Do you prefer democracy because you've had your choice of government and have chosen it? No! You prefer democracy because you were born into it. You accept it because it is all around you. You can read any newspaper you wish and know that the newspaper you are reading is true. You can walk down the street without being stopped every two blocks by a soldier asking for your papers. You have never been subjected to any other way of living.

Have you ever stopped to think why you hate a totalitarian system? You hate it because you have read in books that in a dictatorship people have no freedom of the press, no freedom of worship, and no freedom from fear. But those are just words. Have you ever seen a soldier walk over to a seventy-

year-old man and rip off his beard, a fistfull at a time? Have you ever been cursed at and threatened because of your religion? Have you ever been afraid of walking in the streets? The chances are that your answer to all of these questions is, no. In my case the answer is, yes.

That is why I not only prefer democracy, but I appreciate it. That is why I love the freedom which is granted me. And that is why I hate the totalitarian systems which I have seen operating in Germany, in Austria, in Rumania, in Italy, and in Russia. You have democracy. Keep it, love it, and learn to appreciate it as I do. Remember, democracy is not a commodity that comes naturally; you make it. Just as easily as you can preserve it, you can lose it. Freedom is everybody's job!

## Highlights in Chinese Festivals

HIOK HUANG LEE

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 13, Summer 1950*

THE CHINESE ARE, AS A RULE, HARDWORKING PEOPLE. They have no Saturday half-holidays; neither do they have idle Sundays. They cannot afford such luxuries, for "life competition is too keen in their densely populated country."<sup>1</sup> But if the pathway of the seasons brings few days of rest to the toiling masses of China, there are at least three great festivals to break the monotony of everyday life—the New Year Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, and the Harvest Moon Festival. These festivals are, in a way, social ceremonies which relieve emotional strain and give the participants a sense of increased social security.<sup>2</sup> During these festivals every man lays aside his work for as long as he can afford leisure. Frugal fare gives place to feasting. Reunion takes the bitterness from habitual separation. And amusement, like a bright thread, colors the drab pattern of dull, daily life.<sup>3</sup>

"The Chinese term for festival means a joint or node which marks the critical time in the breathing of Nature when it passes from one mood to another."<sup>4</sup> The most important of these nodes is the New Year Festival. It is the greatest, the longest, the gayest, and the noisiest of all festivals in China.

Preparation for this festival begins early in the Twelfth Month. The house is first thoroughly cleaned and washed. Then old mottoes on the posts and

<sup>1</sup> Juliet Bredon and Igor Mitrophanow, *The Moon Year*, Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1927, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Leach, ed., *Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1949, p. 225.

<sup>3</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Lewis Hodous, *Folkways in China*, London: Arthur Probsthain, 1929, p. 1.

doors are scraped off and new ones pasted in their places. These mottoes are "fortunate phrases" or expressions of ideals in life, written on strips of red paper.<sup>5</sup> Since red is the color of joy and prosperity, these mottoes are supposed to be luck-bringing. As a protection against malignant spirits in the coming year, new "gate gods" are also put up on the double panels of the front door. Their brilliantly-colored figures, pictured in full panoply of war, are guardians of the home par excellence.<sup>6</sup> Legend traces their origin to two generals of the great Emperor Tai Tsung (A. D. 627-650). After his unlucky expedition to Korea, this sovereign, a prey to rage and mortification at his ill-success, fell sick, and night after night teasing imps surrounded his uneasy couch. The court physicians were powerless to help him. Then two favorite generals of the Emperor begged that they be permitted to guard the palace gate and prevent evil ghosts from entering into the palace. Though Tai Tsung doubted their ability to deal with supernatural beings, yet in order not to disappoint them, he granted their request. Fully armed, the faithful servitors posted themselves on guard outside the palace. Strangely enough, the devils and nightmares that had been disturbing the Emperor disappeared at once, and he soon recovered.<sup>7</sup> As a precaution he commanded the court painters to have the portraits of the two generals painted and pasted on the palace gates so that he might never be troubled again by ghostly enemies. This custom of using pictures of warriors to protect the house spread from the palace to the humblest home. It still persists in the present age, a curious and typical example of the continuity of Chinese superstitions.<sup>8</sup>

New Year's Day is the first of the three settling-days for the settlement of accounts in China. It also serves as a common birthday to 470,000,000 Chinese.<sup>9</sup> No matter when one was born, one is reckoned to be a year older on New Year's Day.

"New Year's Day is regarded by the Chinese not only as the beginning of the year but also as the root from which the events of the future grow."<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, what a person does or what happens to him on that day has a great influence upon his life for the whole year, and the Chinese people take every precaution to begin the year in the right atmosphere. No sweeping in the house is allowed on New Year's Day, for it is feared that good fortune and prosperity may be swept out of the house by this action. Great care is also taken to say nothing and do nothing on the first few days of the year as a small mistake may bring bad luck for the rest of the year.

New Year's Day in China always begins with a salvo of firecrackers in an apotheosis of noise. "Noise is a national necessity in China and crackers

<sup>5</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>9</sup> J. Duer Ball, *Things Chinese*, Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1925, p. 79.

<sup>10</sup> Hodous, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

an essential part of every ceremony.”<sup>11</sup> The supposed rationale of their use by the Chinese is that a fusillade of this holiday artillery will put to flight the devils and foul spirits which lurk about the haunts of men. From a scientific point of view, the plentiful supply of sulphur fumes liberated when this uproarious din is in full swing does have the power of exorcising foul spirits of disease from the surrounding atmosphere.

The most complete and ultimate expression of Chinese filial piety is the ceremony of ancestral worship observed during the New Year Festival.<sup>12</sup> Early in the morning of the New Year's Day, all the members of the family, attired in their best garb, gather in the room where the cabinet with the ancestral tablets is kept to pay due respect to their ancestors.<sup>13</sup> The head of the family begins the ceremony by lighting three sticks of incense and holding them in both hands as high as his forehead. He next bows to the tablets of his ancestors. Then he places the three sticks of incense in the incense burner before the tablets. After this he kneels three times, and at each kneeling he kowtows (literally it means “to knock the head”) thrice.<sup>14</sup> The other members then follow according to their rank.

“Later, the master and mistress of the house seat themselves on two stiff chairs in the reception hall, and all those living under the roof kowtow to them in the order of seniority.”<sup>15</sup> Then the head of the family rewards each of them with a generous sum of money wrapped in red paper for good luck. Thus, the New Year is begun with joy and confidence.

The Dragon Boat Festival, celebrated on the fifth day of the Fifth Month, is one of the most generally observed and picturesque festivals in China.<sup>16</sup> “Economically, it marks a turning point in the seasons, for till this day Nature has been gradually ripening, and, from now on, she gradually declines.”<sup>17</sup> Here then is a milestone in the calendar of growth, celebrated in different ways all over the world since the dawn of civilization as the “Festival of the Summer Solstice.”

Various legends have been connected with this festival, and, because of the happenings described in these legends, it has become a day of remembrance as well as one of the three chief festivals of China.<sup>18</sup>

The most popular legend connects this festival with the death of a high-minded statesman and poet called Chu Yuan who lived in the feudal period

<sup>11</sup> Ball, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>12</sup> Arthur H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics*, New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1894, p. 185.

<sup>13</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>16</sup> Hodous, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>17</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

<sup>18</sup> J. G. Cormack, *Everyday Customs in China*, Edinburgh: Grant and Murray, Ltd., 1935, p. 157.

in the Fourth Century B. C.<sup>19</sup> An honest and upright figure in a troubrous and dishonest age, he vainly urged reforms on a prince who turned a deaf ear to his good counsel. Those were the days when loyal patriots believed in the duty of suicide as a moral protest—a suitable remonstrance against shameless conduct on the part of one's lord, imperative when all other means of persuasion had been tried in vain.<sup>20</sup> Thus, when he found himself powerless to check the abuses of his age, Chu Yuan calmly composed the poem "Li Shao," which is an allegorical description of the writer's search for a prince who would listen to good counsel in government, and, clasping a great rock in his arms, he jumped into Tung Ting Lake on the fifth day of the Fifth Month.<sup>21</sup> When his death was known, the people of the country wept in admiration of his sacrifice and threw rice cakes into the water to feed his ghost so that he would not be starved in the other world.

According to another story, there was a rebellious rising south of the Great River over two thousand years ago. The King of Lieh appointed a high official named Chu Yuan to go and quell it.<sup>22</sup> Although Chu Yuan did his best, he was unable to suppress the rebellion. He was deeply grieved because of his failure and besought the King to relieve him of his post and to send another general in his stead. The King was unwilling to do this, but Chu Yuan felt his lack of success so keenly that he took his own life by throwing himself into the River Mih Loh on the fifth day of the Fifth Month.<sup>23</sup> Some fishermen who witnessed the act hastily launched their boats to save him but could not even recover his body. Since then, on the anniversary of the suicide, the fishermen's attempt at rescue has been commemorated by a procession of dragon boats over the inland waters of China.<sup>24</sup> The procession of the past, however, has now developed into races between rival clans who own dragon boats.

Another legend explaining the festival tells of a maiden, Tsao O, whose father, a wizard by profession, was drowned on the fifth day of the Fifth Month. Inasmuch as the body could not be found, the daughter, then fourteen years old, wandered along the bank of the river and finally threw herself into the water. After a few days her body rose to the surface and in her arms was the body of her father.<sup>25</sup>

It is hardly probable that the suicide of a disappointed statesman or the exhibition of filial piety on the part of a daughter could be the real motive for

<sup>19</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>21</sup> Herbert A. Giles, *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary*, Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1898, p. 200.

<sup>22</sup> Cormack, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>24</sup> W. S. Walsh, *Curiosities of Popular Customs*, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1897, p. 349.

<sup>25</sup> Hodous, *op. cit.*, p. 136-7.

such a widely observed festival. However, Chu Yuan or Tsao may be taken to represent to everyone all the drowned who are regarded by the people as powerful deities that control the waters. The offering of rice cakes is no doubt intended to propitiate these supernatural beings so that they may send the waters down, not as destructive floods, but as fructifying rains bringing bountiful harvests and prosperity.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, the dragon boat races may be taken to represent fighting dragons in order to stimulate a real fight between the Dragon Lords in Heaven. According to old myths, such fights were always accompanied by heavy rains which were badly needed in the draught season.<sup>27</sup>

The Harvest Moon Festival, celebrated on the fifteenth day of the Eighth Month, is one of the most joyous occasions of the year. It is also one of the most important dates in the Chinese calendar as it coincides with the moon's birthday.<sup>28</sup> According to an old Chinese theory, the moon and the sun are the two great principles that control Nature. The sun is considered as the source of virile energy, light, and heat. The moon is regarded as typifying darkness and cold. The sun has been the dominating power in the early part of the year, but in the Eighth Month, when summer heat gives way to autumn coolness, the moon begins to take the upper hand in Nature. "The fifteenth night of the Eighth Month is the moon's apogee; at no other time is she so bright and brilliant."<sup>29</sup> The background of this festivity, however, is not only the worshipping of the Queen of Night but also in the nature of thanksgiving as at this time harvest is assured and a part of it is already gathered in.<sup>30</sup>

The moon-cake—a round pastry filled with sugar and fragrant petals—is made especially for this occasion as an offering to the Queen of Night. Its shape not only symbolizes the moon but also stands for unity.<sup>31</sup> A story is often told of the leading part it played in liberating the Chinese people from their Mongol oppressors:

In the Fourteenth Century, the Mongols gained control of China, and many Chinese patriots were massacred. Fearing that in time the Chinese people might be strong enough to retaliate, the Mongol rulers commanded that each Chinese household should have a Mongol as one of the inmates of the house and that he should be treated as one belonging to the family. These Mongols stationed in Chinese homes were in effect spies, and they prohibited intercourse between one household and another.<sup>32</sup> They were exceedingly overbearing, taking to themselves the power of rulers in the houses and forcing all to bow to their will. The women especially were treated like slaves

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>27</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 398.

<sup>30</sup> Hodous, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

<sup>31</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

<sup>32</sup> Cormack, *op. cit.*, p. 173-5.

under their yoke. There was no chance for the Chinese to organize a rebellion since they were closely watched by the Mongol spies. They were utterly helpless under the Mongols' oppression. But the deep hatred they had for the Mongol oppressors urged them to look for means by which they could rally all the people for a wide-spread rising without the suspicion of the spies. Their efforts were not unrewarded. One day they hit upon the idea of writing a secret message on the little red paper squares stuck on the moon-cakes. When sent, as they still are, from neighbor to neighbor and friend to friend, the pastries carried the order for a rising en masse at midnight on the fifteenth day of the Eighth Month.<sup>33</sup> Though the oppressed Chinese people were without weapons save their kitchen choppers, hatred strengthened their arms. The surprise attack succeeded, and the revolt ultimately led to the complete overthrow of the Mongol Dynasty. For this reason, the festival is specially celebrated by the Chinese women in remembrance of the deliverance of their forebears from the oppressors. It is also called the Festival of Reunion by the Chinese people in memory of the day when it was made possible for them to become closely united after years of isolation.<sup>34</sup>

It is no exaggeration to say that "festival is the most concrete expression of collective emotions."<sup>35</sup> It has already become one of the most important factors in the social life of the Chinese. Though the wasteful expenditure lavished by the people on occasions of festivity has been blamed by the government as one of the causes of the economic difficulty in the country, yet it seems only fair to say that the government itself neglected the many social advantages to be derived from festivals and has shown no interest in using the solemnity and pageantry of festivals as means to cultivate civic loyalty and patriotism.

<sup>33</sup> Bredon and Mitrophanow, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

<sup>34</sup> Cormack, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>35</sup> Edwin R. A. Seligman, ed., *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, New York: Macmillan Co., 1944, p. 200.

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# I Have a Kingdom!

ANNE POTTHAST

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 11*

MY KINGDOM CONSISTS OF A HARD, WOOD DESK, PILED high with books, and a straight-back chair, scratched with use. Here I sit for hours on end and rule. I rule each author whose books are in my kingdom, by choosing to read or to ignore his works. I rule the printed words and voiced words of my friends, my teachers, and my superiors, deciding which I shall use, and which I shall cherish. My kingdom is small and cluttered, but rich in inspiration and silent consolation.

Just to the left and above my throne, the pictured likenesses of a few close friends are tacked on a dull blue blotter. Above these snapshots a likeness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus holds the place of honor. Next to it, a yellowed piece of cardboard bears the scrolled inscription—IF, FOR GIRLS. “If you can be a girl and glory in it, because it is the place for you to fill, if you can be a lady every minute—if nothing less than what is best can win you, you’ll be the girl God meant for you to be!” This poem was a gift from my mother on my sixteenth birthday. The few elaborately printed lines have become a source of comfort and act as a booster shot, building up added immunity against the little temptations that beset me on all sides.

Then comes my calendar, with its scribbled reminders and memoirs of meetings, parties and dates. Last but not least on my bulletin board can be found the souvenirs of my last year in high school—dance bids, gay colored paper napkins, football programs, a fuzzy comic valentine, limp corsage ribbons, and newspaper clippings—stabbed into the wall with straight pins and thumb tacks.

Right next to my desk, within easy reach, is my bookcase, bulging with text books and stacks of hastily-written notes. A small wine-colored radio graces the top shelf, together with Humpy, a soft, yellow rabbit, who fills the office of mascot in this peculiar kingdom.

Confusion reigns supreme on the desk itself. A wooden letter-holder, carved by the stubby hands of my younger brother, takes up at least four square inches; a tiny blue vase, souvenir of Washington, D. C., is in constant danger of tottering to the floor and smashing to pieces. Two framed pictures, a study lamp, a dust-covered ink bottle, and a lost button occupy the outer edge, while on both sides the most frequently used school books are heaped, leaving only a small open space down the middle to actually work on!

Pinned to my study lamp are abbreviated notes to myself—“See advisor, see psych. quiz instructor about grade, buy soap”—. In hurrying to and fro these busy days, forgetfulness results from the fierce battle of the many

thoughts, ideas and worries that fight for recognition in my small brain. The notes help to refresh my memory, and as I complete each task, I cross it off the list.

Every evening, I struggle to enrich my mind with the great works of other men, and from the same spot comes all creative work of my own—inspired themes, Spanish assignments and term papers flow from my pen to either do me honor or to bring disgrace.

So you see, I have quite a kingdom. Although no blaring bands or scarlet-coated footmen greet me on my return home, there is the soft swish of wet leaves on the window pane, and my stuffed, jolly rabbit and tall, straight lamp stand in dumb respect while I once more ascend the throne.

## "Hamp"

GEORGE TROUTMAN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 1*

PSYCHOLOGISTS SAY THAT PERSONS AND EVENTS connected with childhood are among the strongest factors influencing the remainder of an individual's life. For this reason, if for no other, I have always felt extremely fortunate that I knew Hamp Peterson.

Hamp was an elderly colored man who did odd jobs about the farm on which I was reared in south Georgia. Since the jobs were largely inconsequential and not overly time-consuming, and because his two sons were grown men with families of their own, he spent a large portion of his days and often his nights teaching my two brothers and me the things which he enjoyed doing most—hunting, fishing, and trapping. To Hamp these things were uppermost in life. He was happiest doing them, and, indeed, his actual livelihood often depended upon his ability to do them well.

He gave us an insight into many of the secrets of the woodsman. From him we learned where to find the biggest fish in the streams and how we should walk on the bank away from the sun so that our shadows would not be cast onto the water. He taught us how to tread lightly and silently on the leaves and grass in order to avoid frightening the squirrels and other small game when we were hunting. We learned to tell whether the rustle of a tree branch was caused by a breeze or by a small animal and whether the tracks beside a stream were made by a bear, by a racoon, or by a skunk. He told us what bait to use in our traps, where we should set them, and how to camouflage them so that they would look natural. Before long we were able to recognize many different plants, berries, and trees, such as the sassafras tree, whose flavorful root we boiled in water and made into a very tasty tea for many of our camping trips. We learned to find our directions in the woods

and to determine which snakes were poisonous and where they would lurk. He taught us to recognize the calls of many birds and animals and to differentiate between the chattering of an excited wood thrush and the bark of a feeding fox-squirrel.

As Hamp influenced my childhood by familiarizing me with the friendly curiosities of the outdoors, he left for my manhood many unforgettable memories and an undying love of nature. Unwittingly, he taught me the priceless ability to relax. The jostling crowds and blaring automobile horns are far away when I make camp at dusk and look up at the twinkling stars as they make their appearance behind the disappearing sun. The tribulations of my everyday life are dwarfed or forgotten when I hike across a green meadow surrounded by serene and majestic trees. Because of Hamp I learned a set of values which makes me place contentment ahead of overwhelming material success.

As I wandered through the woods with Hamp, I thought, as a boy does, of only the excitement and pleasures of the moment. Now as I look back, however, I realize that my associations with Hamp have served to make my life a fuller, richer, and more enjoyable one.

## Watch Out! Here Comes a Pedestrian

IRENE L. SHUETT

*Rhetoric X-101, Assignment 3*

AMONG THE NATIVE POPULATION, CHICAGO IS A CITY of stoppers-in-their-tracksers. We are all familiar with the ambling tourist who stops and gazes around every few dozen paces, and any Chicagoan worth his salt can recognize him half a block away and avoid him. The dangerous ones are the natives who trot along at the usual rapid pace, then stop dead with no warning. I can be tolerant of the weave-in-and-outers and the poke-alongers and can even go along with the don't-quite-know-where-they're-goingers, but if I ever can get from Monroe Street to Wacker Drive without whamming into some sudden stopper it would be a red-letter day for me. This species in its advanced stage stops and bends over in one motion, leaving the fellow behind him with a 50-50 chance of going fanny over forelock.

The usual pace of the experienced downtowner is a sort of half gallop with considerable body English, closely resembling broken field running. The scout for the Chicago Bears is missing a bet if he fails to spend a little time watching the Dearborn Street swivelhips during the five o'clock rush. He

could learn a few new angles from watching them take advantage of a hole in the line to gain a few yards. Of course there are no ground rules here, and a straight arm or shoulder and elbow thrust are not considered foul unless they are tried on someone bigger than yourself.

Those who go through a revolving door and then stop right in the doorway are a little unnerving, too, as they leave only the choice between giving them a shove and going around again. Since few persons care to make like a merry-go-round, these stoppers usually get their richly-deserved shove. Close kin to these are the Revolving Door Deadheads. Nobody minds giving the door an extra push for an old lady, but usually it is the old lady who is doing the muscle work while some sweet young thing strolls through without soiling her hands.

I can never understand how (or why) the street corner conferrers live so long. These are usually ten or twelve teen-agers or half a dozen assorted fortyish females standing right in the cross traffic, giggling and nudging one another as they decide which movie or restaurant is suitable to all, while the air gets bluer and bluer from the comments of the passersby.

We won't discuss the spitters-on-the-sidewalk. They belong in the same category as the pigeons, only the pigeons don't know any better. But to round out our study of the pedestrian, we surely cannot overlook the sturdy fellow who gets in the back corner of a crowded elevator in a twenty-story building and wants out at the second floor; or those who will stand out in the middle of the street when a fire engine is screaming for clearance; or those who take a lead off the curb when the traffic light is against them. What's that? Crossers-in-the-middle-of-the-blockers? Well, that *was* unkind!

Downtowners are a stolid lot, too—not easily surprised. A tandem bicycle manned by a couple in gay 90's clothes, advertising the recent opening of "The Drunkard," rated no more than a second glance. A little colored boy leading a Shetland pony down the middle of the street car tracks got attention only from the irate motormen behind him. A disheveled man with a black eye, so badly beaten up that he could scarcely stand, lurched along one morning; not a soul offered him help. Uniforms of all kinds and nations raise no eyebrows; and the designer of the backless, strapless, topless sun dress can find it sauntering around downtown along with its cousin the bra-and-shorts combination any sunny day.

It takes a man in Scottish kilts to turn the heads of these stout folk. With knees agleam and bonnet tilted at an impossible angle, he stopped traffic when he strode down Wabash Avenue with his bright red plaid kilts and sporran swinging in time to every step. Heads turned that day. Not only did people stare; they stopped and stared, started on, and stopped and turned and stared some more. I didn't think anything could rouse these blasé pedestrians, and when I saw the sensation he was creating, I wanted to fling my hat in the air and cheer.

# Blind People with Pink Velvet Poppies in Their Hair

CHARLES BOUGHTON

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 7*

DOROTHY PARKER ONCE WROTE A SHORT STORY called "Arrangement in Black and White". In it, she presented a satirized situation—no moralizing, no comment, no pain, no strain. Its overall impression might be illustrated by the final speech:

"I liked him," she said. "I haven't any feeling at all because he's a colored man. I felt just as natural as I would with anybody. Talked to him just as naturally, and everything. But honestly, I could hardly keep a straight face. I kept thinking of Burton. Oh, wait till I tell Burton I called him 'Mister'!"

Granted, the "woman with the pink velvet poppies twined round the assisted gold of her hair" has been exaggerated for purposes of clarity, but she is a pretty good example of all the hypocritical do-gooders who read *Kingsblood Royal* and immediately become enlightened and prejudice-free.

Actually, these people do more harm than good. They repress their prejudices and force themselves to act as they imagine the heroes in our current crop of anti-prejudice fiction would act. It is much more important to recognize the prejudice we all have for what it is and to try systematically and sincerely to combat it.

The "pink velvet poppy ladies" (and gentlemen—using the terms loosely) are easy to recognize. When they have recently forced themselves to behave "properly" in an "embarrassing situation," you will hear them boasting loudly of their accomplishments. They almost never succeed in realizing that these very boasts are a conspicuous attribute of the prejudice they claim to lack. The person who has truly conquered his prejudice thinks no differently of social contact with a Negro than he does of social contact with someone who happens to have blue eyes. There is nothing for him to brag about.

The "pink velvet poppy league" has another characteristic that stems from a failure to understand what its goals should be. Members of this league become social workers. They petition legislatures to alleviate the miserable housing conditions in "colored districts" Period. These things are all well and good, but they are in the nature of temporary relief and do not, in themselves, constitute any kind of permanent solution to the problem.

The object *is not* to force themselves to become friendly with all the "poor underprivileged Negroes"! The object *is* to meet every person you come in contact with as an individual; evaluate and treat him accordingly, without regard to his race or color.

Many people have come this far without understanding the last paragraph. If a Negro does not measure up to personal standards, the fact that he is a Negro does not give him special privilege or place him in a separate category. Further, physical repulsion alone does not constitute prejudice. It is just as easy for a white person to be repulsed by a member of his own race as by a Negro. If that repulsion stems from reasons other than color of the skin, there is no reason why it should be stifled. That way lies insincerity, artificiality, and nothing constructive. Neither is it fair to argue that I am wrong, that the Negro is a special case, that his environment is responsible. Environment is just as responsible in the case of his white counterpart. But prejudice has made it nearly impossible for the Negro to rise above his environment. That's where the social workers come in. They make it possible for an ever increasing number of Negroes to prove their individual worth and merit.

We must take this regrettably slow and painful path—the individuals must slowly (but permanently) refute the malicious rumors and misconceptions that surround their race—if this problem is ever to disappear.

## A Tax Review Board

MARGARET GRAHAM

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 4*

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND MANY OTHER PUBLIC UTILITIES are maintained by the taxing of property owners. Since there is much room for error in making true valuations of properties, a tax review board has been set up in nearly every county in Illinois to protect the taxpayer. This board is composed of a chairman, who must belong to the dominant political party of his county, plus three other property-owning members. One of these three members must represent the opposing political party. The function of the board of tax review is to equalize and correct any discrepancies in assessed property valuation.

Each year the local tax assessor inspects each of the parcels of property within his district and sets a valuation of what he considers eighty per cent of its current sale value. Since his time is limited, he must sometimes make hasty surveys of this property and often this results in erroneous assessments and unfair tax bills.

Some of the most common errors made by the tax assessor are: (1) assessing improvements or buildings which are not completed; (2) assessing over the eighty per cent true valuation standard; (3) assessing farm land on the same scale per acre as urban property; (4) including on the personal property tax roll items such as automobiles which have depreciated beyond taxing value; (5) neglecting to assess new improvements; (6) assessing properties of comparable value unequally.

Whenever the taxpayer feels that he has been unfairly assessed, he may file a complaint with the board of tax review, stating the reasons for his complaint and stating what he believes would be a true valuation. The board members then make a thorough investigation of the property in question and a hearing is set in order that the taxpayer may hold a personal interview and express his opinions. At this time the board hands down its decision. In the event that the property has been unfairly assessed, a writ of error is issued, a change of assessed valuation is recorded in the tax books, and the tax bill is lowered to its proper amount.

## Safe and Sane Serenades

JAMES DECKER

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 5*

"PLAGUE UPON YOU, LOVESICK RASCALS! GET YOU gone, you noisy villains!" These lyrics from a song written by Haydn show that even in his day the amorous serenader was not popular with the unmusical slumberer. The fact that this condition remains may discourage a newcomer to the art of musical wooing. However, if a prospective charmer is careful and benefits from past experience as I have done, he will find that by and by he will be offensive to only a few of the immediate neighbors of the fair maiden being serenaded.

Unfortunately, my first serenade suffered from the blunderings that are so typical of impetuous youths. It happened like this. The lady had confined herself to her room with the inadequate excuse that she had to do homework. My friend asked me to help him gain an audience with her, so I suggested a serenade. That was my first mistake. My next mistake was ringing the door-bell. The person who opened the door was some pale, ghastly creature with metallic objects fastened to her head. She identified herself as the lady in question, whereupon I ordered her to her room so that we could serenade her in the more obscure darkness outside. While I was singing Italian arias *fortissimo*, my friend, who had not forgot his original purpose, was scaling

the wall to the damsel's window. It was in this awkward situation that we were discovered—or caught if you like—by a perturbed neighbor. Mumbling something about testing the acoustics, we made our apologies and fled, our serenade a complete failure.

Nevertheless I learned many things from this valuable experience which has made me more popular with everyone concerned. First, I learned that you should be fairly sure the person being serenaded will enjoy it. Second, always throw pebbles to attract attention. It frightens the person so much that she is relieved to see it is only a harmless warbler. Third, sing soft love ballads with beautiful words. Actually the words are more effective than the music because the listener thinks the lyrics pertain to her and is often quite moved by their sentiment. In this manner a usually inept conversationalist may become eloquent enough to profess the passion that is in his soul, and even some that is not. But the important rule is to keep your feet on the ground and travel light. By following these simple rules, I have reduced the occupational hazards of the serenade considerably, making it a more pleasurable experience.

## And the Rains Came Upon Us

DAVID A. TRAEGER

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 12*

DURING ONE OF THOSE LATE SUMMERS IN MY MIDDLE teens when things were beginning to drag a little and school was not quite ready to revolutionize once more my way of living, Ron Blair mentioned to me that his father had promised him the car for a two-week vacation if he had any worthwhile plans for a trip. Now Ron seemed to have the urge to go to Canada and when he asked me to go with him, I thought the trip would be fun.

The first problem was to obtain my parents' permission; and though Mom and Dad were somewhat shocked at my request, I received their approval. I suppose they figured that the trip might bring out the man in me; Mom and Dad were always looking for the man in me, and I did so want them to find it.

Ron and I began making plans for the trip. We decided to make it a canoe trip. Canoe trips always sounded exciting to me; and although I'd never before been in a canoe, I felt quite qualified for the venture because I had been a Boy Scout and I had read a couple of books about canoe trips—*Captain Rawlings Goes Over the Falls* and *The Go-Ahead Boys in the North Woods*. Ron and I decided that the trip could be taken most efficiently if we had two

more boys with us. We asked Len Koenen and Bob Lock, and they were quite willing to risk the trip. Bob wanted to know if there were any girls in the crew; fortunately there were none.

We all did some calculating as to the expenses of the trip, and Ron was elected to purchase all the food we were to take. We always split the food bills in four, but I noticed later that the food was not always distributed as exactly. As for equipment, the other three boys had the idea imbedded in their thinking that the Canadian rain season had already passed; and therefore, tents would be not only heavy but quite unnecessary. As gullible as I am, I believed the boys; however, I finally persuaded them to take sleeping bags.

We decided to make Ely, Minnesota, our starting point. There we planned to leave the car, rent two canoes, and begin our journey. To me the whole plan seemed well organized though there was some quibbling about the type of food Ron had purchased. Ron had not bought much meat of any kind.

Early on a Monday morning, we left home in Ron's car. I can still see my parents—in that worried, uneasy stance they sometimes have when I am involved in a leavetaking—at the door; Mother was trying so hard to smile. Ron's father had given him explicit instructions to drive carefully—under fifty miles an hour. We managed to follow orders well for the first twenty-five miles. We all took turns driving, but Ron always saw to it that he was in the front seat. I noticed when I was driving that Ron was trying to help me. He often would stamp his foot on an imaginary brake when he thought we were approaching danger. Once I even caught him shifting gears with a fishing pole he had resting between his legs. He seemed quite nervous.

We couldn't make Ely the first day. We stopped along the way and practiced using our sleeping bags by the roadside. Lord knows why we needed the practice because we had plenty of practice sessions in the immediate future. However, the next morning we drove on. We arrived at Ely that afternoon and went to the Canoe Country Outfitters' agency. We checked out two canoes for ten days—the boys decided to make the trip ten days instead of two weeks because they were getting homesick. After taking in a movie called *Up in Central Park*—Judy Garland was in the movie; I remember her because she used to be my favorite actress—we spent the night in Ely Central Park. The boys thought they needed more practice with their sleeping bags.

We arose early in the morning and went to the agency in the car. We put the canoes on the car and rented three pack sacks into which we put all the food and small equipment. Then we drove over to the waterfront. After Ron had parked the car on three different safe-looking spots and had locked each door twice, we were ready to start.

After we had put the canoes into the water, we placed the pack sacks in the canoes. The canoes seemed as if they were loaded to capacity even though

we were not in them as yet. Somehow, we managed to make room for ourselves; we shoved off singing the "Volga Boatman."

I would not say that we were expert mariners, and at first, we made very little, if any, progress. The canoes didn't seem to sense the direction we had so carefully planned to follow, and several times one canoe would pass the other going in the opposite direction. Before long, everyone was very tired and aching, but we were not the ones to quit so soon.

Our first portage was the worst. The pack sacks were loaded to the brim; we were tired, and the canoes seemed so awkward to carry that even the portage itself seemed long. We had to make several trips back and forth before we were ready to continue.

Once again, we were in the water. Some Girl Scouts passed us, and I think they were laughing at us. We passed the Ranger Station separating the United States and Canada. The realization of the fact that we were now in foreign territory occasioned a rather general attack of nostalgia. As dusk approached that day, we pulled into a small island and made our camp for the night. No one had much to say. In a sort of listless confusion we prepared a meal consisting of bacon, baked beans, dried noodles, gelatin, canned milk, tea, apricots, and dill pickles. We should have been hungry because this was our first meal that day, but there was no great display of that enthusiasm so often shown by people eating a picnic supper. Somehow, the food we ate did not taste as good to me as Mother's cooking. My fellow-travelers must have had similar reactions, but we evaded the issue and agreed to take turns cooking thereafter. We finished our meal and crawled into our sleeping bags early; I for one was grateful for being physically tired.

Each day carried us farther into Canada. The days seemed about the same except for little incidents. We would stop only to eat, sleep, and rest. We intended to paddle into Canada for three days, find a camp, and stay there for four days. We allowed three days for the return trip. We noticed, as we progressed, that there were very few people in the area besides ourselves. Of course, we didn't mind looking at each other for the first few days, but later, I'd have given a day's rations to see another face besides that of Len, Ron and Bob.

The outfitters had supplied us with a map which we were trying to follow. Once, when we referred to the map for our position, we found that we were supposed to be in a narrow channel; we happened to be at the time on a very wide lake. We concluded that the map was misprinted and threw it overboard. The boys claimed that the sun was used as a guide by the ancients, and who are we to argue with the ancients? Many cloudy days were to follow.

Eventually, we came to the conclusion that we were lost. After some frustration among the crew, we spotted a lone cottage on the shore to the left. We paddled toward the structure and found an old fisherman sitting on a pier leading out from the cottage. The old man was chewing tobacco, and

he had his eyes set firmly on the waters beneath his overhanging feet. His hands tenaciously held a fishing pole which he apparently had been using since he was a child. We asked the man if he could tell us where we were and how we could get back on our planned route. After some deliberation, the fisherman gave us some directions. I think he resented such intrusions on his peace and quiet because he kept muttering, "Damn kids, always scaring my fish."

We made two unnecessary portages just to get back on the route. By the time we made the portages, we had been traveling for three days. The food was still holding out, and the weather had been favorable. We were accustomed to our sleeping bags at last, and we seemed in better physical condition than we had been previously. The time had come to look for a four-day camp site. We found a beautiful island surrounded by huge boulders. The island seemed uninhabited, and we thought that the boulders would make excellent diving platforms. Later we discovered that the boulders were also suitable for playing "leap-frog."

Here on the island, we began to see the intensity of Canadian night rainfall. Each night on this island, the rains would descend just after we were neatly tucked inside our sleeping bags. We had no tents, and, although we were surrounded by huge pine trees, the rain seemed all the more determined to drench us. We soon arranged to take turns waiting up for the rain. The rains would usually come without much warning, but as soon as the "rain-scout" realized showers were coming, he would quickly awaken the rest of the crew. Then we would stuff all the perishable food and valuable equipment in our sleeping bags and spend the rest of the night sleeping among oranges, pancake flour, bacon, sugar, tea, and potatoes. I spent the most uncomfortable nights of my life on that island when I was sleeping in the water. We always managed to dry out our sleeping bags during the sunny days only to have them soaked again at night when new rains would seep through the canvas and bathe our feet.

Rain was not the only worry we encountered at this time. Quite a bit of our food was gone. Some of the food had been destroyed in the rains, some had been used as fish bait, and some had been wasted in a food war we staged one morning when we were in a peculiar mood. We found that we had no meat left at all except when someone would bring back a fish. After we had completed taking inventory, we actually had three boxes of pancake flour and two boxes of Bisquick. That was all. I didn't care much for the fish the boys infrequently brought home, and I soon became tired of pancakes for breakfast, biscuits for lunch, and pancakes for supper. I swore that I would never eat pancakes or biscuits again if we ever got back home. I think the meals might have impaired our health somewhat. We didn't talk to each other much at all. Len and Bob had a big argument when Len found that Bob was hiding a box of sugar in his sleeping bag. Bob had been using sugar on his pancakes

and biscuits. The only other disturbance was when Ron thought he heard Indians in the woods one night. We finally convinced him that the noise was made by a bear or snake, and he seemed relieved as he quietly turned over to sleep again.

When the time to start back home came around, we were almost too eager. The realization that soon we would be back in civilization, that soon we would be able to nourish ourselves with decent meals, and that soon we would be able to shelter ourselves from the mighty rains seemed to drive our paddles deeper and faster into the choppy blue waters.

We arrived back at Ely two days after we had left the island even though we had been delayed four hours one afternoon by a violent thunderstorm. We pulled the canoes ashore and literally raced to the nearest restaurant. Unshaven as we were, we all indulged in one of the biggest feasts we had ever eaten. Finishing the meal, we returned our canoes and pack sacks to the outfitters' agency; and after we had paid the bill, we had very little cash to spare. Consequently, we slept that night in the park again. That night I saw the Aurora Borealis for the first time. The sight was one of the most beautiful I have ever seen, as all kinds of colored formations darted in and out among the clouds.

We arose early the next morning, and we started back home in the car. We seemed to drive very fast, and even Ron seemed in a hurry when he drove. By nightfall, we were on the Chicago side of Madison, Wisconsin. Ron refused to let the car be driven at night, but Len and I were so eager to get home that we decided to hitchhike the rest of the way that night. We had moderate luck until four o'clock in the morning. We had been picked up seven times, but most of the rides were of short duration. With fifty cents between us, we were halfway home and couldn't buy a ride from there. We fell asleep along the roadside without sleeping bags. In the morning, I found a telephone and called my mother. She hesitantly agreed to come to the rescue and pick us up.

That ride home in our familiar family car,—with my mother at the wheel asking innumerable questions, admonishing a little but sympathizing a lot as I looked at her with my sleepless, lean, bearded face—is one of the most pleasant rides I can remember. I was beginning to feel normal again, anticipating the comforts and security of home. Len and I were just complimenting ourselves on not waiting for the other boys when Mother turned into the driveway. There on our front lawn sat two smiling boys, Ron and Bob, looking clean, refreshed, and ever so pleased with themselves. They had had a full night's sleep at the place where Len and I had left them—and they had been home already for six hours. Such is life.

# No Place to Hide

RICHARD M. BARTUNEK

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 6*

THE TIME IS ABLE DAY MINUS THIRTY. IN ONE SHORT month the world will have an answer to the riddle of the effectiveness of the atomic bomb against naval weapons. Do these thirty days represent the remaining existence of the Bikini fleet, or of the world, or neither? Can the blasts spark a fission reaction between the billions of water molecules of the Pacific Ocean? Are the ports of the west coast in danger of being smothered and smashed by herculean tidal waves?

The answers to these questions are now history, due to the efforts of the scientists of Operation Crossroads who observed and interpreted the great experiment and formulated the log of events before, during, and after the detonation of the Bikini bombs. Doctor David Bradley was assigned to the Radiological Monitors Division of Joint Task Force One. *No Place to Hide* is his diary.

The book is written for the masses. The language is simple; anyone with a smattering of high school chemistry or merely an understanding of barber shop nuclear physics will not be troubled by the author's scientific terminology. Had the book been written otherwise, Doctor Bradley would have defeated his own purpose. He is an exponent of, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He believes, and who doesn't, that atomic energy is here to stay, wanted or unwanted. He believes that men must either come to understand atomic energy and learn to live with it, or return to their caves and prepare for a third Dark Age.

The scientific arm of Joint Task Force One assembled in May of 1946 aboard the converted hospital ship the *U.S.S. Haven* in San Francisco Bay. The date set by President Truman for Test Able was July first. In one month the largest scientific army in history had mustered its forces at Bikini, a heretofore unimportant dot in the vastness of the Pacific. The "game" was about to begin. Navy was playing host to the Army Air Corps. The spectators were 40,000 technicians. The participants of the game were a huge target fleet comprised of ships of almost every type, drawn from the navies of many nations, and two seemingly insignificant bombs. Although there would be no winner, the "smart money" was bet on the Air Corps. The object of the game was, supposedly, to determine the better method of destroying an enemy's fleet. The plan for the first half, called "Test Able," was to detonate a bomb several hundred feet above the masts of the test fleet. The "knockout punch," if one was required, was to be delivered in "Test Baker"—a detonation at the water line. When the balls of fire that had been first used in New Mexico

and later at Hiroshima and Nagasaki had diffused themselves into live steam and seared battleships, the hardest job of Operation Crossroads, the work of the so-called "ground keepers," began. The task of determining the far-reaching effects of the two explosions was left to the scientist. Marine biologists began their studies of the effects of radiation on fish and marine plant life. Doctors, physicists, and chemists worked side by side safeguarding, or trying to safeguard, the health of the men who were assigned to the inspection of the dead, but still deadly fleet. Oceanographers began their study of the effects of the tremendous shock waves upon the coral formations of the atoll. By October the necessary data had been assembled, confiscated, and swallowed in a maze of military security. Operation Crossroads was dissolved.

The Bikini tests were a failure not because of error in observation, but because of error in publicity. Had the world been presented with the real results of the twin explosions and been allowed to examine what was left of the once proud *Enterprise*, the *New York*, and the *Pensacola*, Tests Able and Baker would not have been in vain. Our civilization is doomed unless people begin to think in terms of peace rather than in the "safety" fabricated from stockpiles of death and destruction. There is no real defense against atomic weapons. There is no place to hide.

## Wealth Can Be as Dangerous As Poverty

DON COE

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 12*

THE REAL DANGER IN BOTH POVERTY AND WEALTH lies in the reaction of the individual to extremes of wealth or poverty.

For the purposes of this discussion, wealth will mean the abundance of material goods, and poverty will mean the lack of material goods. It is possible to be spiritually wealthy while lacking material wealth; Christianity teaches us this virtue. We shall not concern ourselves with spiritual wealth.

There is an old proverb passed down through the ages which reads, Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. This is a fitting proverb for this discussion because it describes in two words, idle hands, the danger which lies in wealth.

Man's ego is endowed by nature with an expressive or creative desire to produce material goods and to further the progress of civilization. Combating the creative urge in man is a natural instinct which is called laziness. These two urges are in constant conflict every minute of the day.

If a person is endowed with material wealth, his necessity to produce or create material goods is removed, and the forces of laziness will dominate his

personality. Unless he is of a strong will power, he will degenerate into mental stagnation. This degeneration in itself is not harmful. The danger lies in the creative ego of man seeking expression through a degenerate and shrinking personality.

In order to satisfy the ego and attract attention, the creative urge goes to the negative extreme. Your attention is invited to the daily newspapers for proof of the preceding statement. Witness the number of brilliant and wealthy people of this nation who have embraced the doctrine of Communism. Is there a logical reason for the acceptance of Communism by wealthy people when the Communistic doctrine seeks to destroy their wealth? Is it logical to assume, then, that wealthy people accept a doctrine which seeks to destroy them because of a suppressed desire for self-expression which was suppressed by their own wealth?

A poor man is easily persuaded to accept a doctrine that will give him more goods for daily consumption. His philosophy of life could easily be that he has nothing to lose and everything to gain by a doctrine such as Communism. How easy it is for a shrewd man, gifted with organizational ability, to weld the manpower from the ranks of the poor people with the wealth from the ranks of the rich people, and create a powerful force to spread the doctrine of Communism. The wedding of wealth and poverty is gaining momentum in many parts of the world.

If wealth is as dangerous as poverty, what is the answer to the ills that plague mankind in his relationship with his fellow men? I do not propose a new doctrine to solve the world's ills. The answer lies in education of the individuals in their responsibilities to mankind. Moral and spiritual values must be taught to each individual before these values will be reflected in international relations. The education of the individuals will be a huge task, but the results will warrant the effort.

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**S**CR-E-E-CH . . . C-RUNCH . . . A BROODING SILENCE . . . then two simultaneous barrages of profanity shatter the atmosphere.

A peaceful afternoon on John Street is interrupted, and bleary-eyed students wander from the indeterminable shadows to investigate this clamor. Upon my arrival at the scene, two bespectacled chauffeurs were vehemently appraising each other's ancestry and character. The cause for all this hullabaloo was clearly evident in the form of two slightly outmoded roadsters; roadsters with crumpled radiators.

Deriving little satisfaction from the verbal battle, the chauffeurs' accusing fusillade dwindled to occasional bursts of censored remarks, mumbled threats, and belligerent grunts. At last, at a loss for words, they recorded one another's license numbers and stalked away with treacherous gleams in their eyes.

The spattering of student onlookers that had accumulated reluctantly dispersed, but not before proclaiming the criminal. I, curious as to the outcome of this episode, sought vainly for more information. Seemingly, it was just another happenstance of which life is composed and which will be swept into the doubtful yesterday.

F. J. D. MARTIN

# My First Taste of Maturity

AUDREY WILSEY

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 10*

I RECEIVED MY FIRST TASTE OF MATURITY ABOUT FIVE or six years ago, but yet I can remember every detail. How old was I?

About twelve. I used to go to Hines Veterans Hospital to play the piano, entertain the boys, and give them cigarettes. Twelve years is a very young age, and I was young; I was innocent of the things life entailed.

One night in December, I entered the Hines Hospital with the purpose of entertaining the patients. I hopped up onto the movable piano ensemble, and the head nurse wheeled me along the corridor to Ward A.

Each ward contained forty boys, and as we entered the first ward, I saw forty heads duck under the covers. The room was silent. Suddenly one of the patients peeked out from beneath the covers and yelled, "Hey fellas, it's only a kid." In almost perfect unison, each man lifted his head from underneath his blanket. They greeted me with enthusiasm. I played a few ballads on the piano, and then with a sudden bang, I burst into a red-hot boogie woogie piece. The sounds of a loud, appreciative applause and shouts clamoring for more came like the first sight of a welcome mat. I played two additional boogie woogie pieces, and I stopped.

I reached for a large box filled with cigarettes and proceeded to distribute them to the veterans. One of the veterans had paralyzed hands, and he asked me to light his cigarette. Clumsily, I pushed the cigarette between his lips and lit it for him. I lingered a few moments to exchange polite conversation with him. During the conversation, he said to me, "You know, honey, you're the prettiest girl I've seen in a long time." I was flattered, but because of the self-consciousness of a twelve-year-old girl, I blushed and walked away. Later, my young mind started to function when a nurse mentioned to me that he was blind.

I went to four other wards; I played for four more hours, almost continuously. My thumb started to throb with pain as I beat out the boogie basses. I did not stop because I knew that I had only one more number to complete, and then I would be finished for the evening; then I could go home. My throbbing thumb kept in rhythm with my music. It seemed to beat out, "You are pretty; he is blind. You are pretty; he is blind. . . ."

When I finished the piece, the head nurse asked me to play for a patient down the hall. He was in a private room, and only the hopeless patients had private rooms. I told her that I would be glad to do anything that I could for him. The piano was pushed just outside the room. He could see me, but

I could not see him. He requested boogie woogie, and with my throbbing thumb, I played boogie as though my blood kept in rhythm with each beat of music. How my thumb ached! The beat, beat, beat of the pain again called out, "You are pretty; he is blind. You are pretty; he is blind. . . ." My thoughts were confused, and I wanted desperately to stop playing. I could not endure the pain in my thumb any longer. I had to stop, but yet I had to continue. That boy in the room wanted to hear it. Just at that moment, the head nurse whispered to me, "You may stop now. He can't hear you any more."

That night, I left the hospital with my first taste of maturity. I did not like it; it was bitter.

## Deathly . . . Silence . . .

F. J. D. MARTIN

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 12*

THE CADILLAC SPED TOWARD THE CROSSROAD FROM the south, and from the east came an old Ford. Two autos, each from a different direction, were approaching a common point. It was inevitable that they should meet.

The night is quiet. Someone has died. The quietness is broken by a wailing siren. Police arrive and place the red accident flares. Men in white uniforms are busy gathering fragments of men. A wrecker backs up to a twisted heap of metal. The wrecker's tires track through sticky blood and splintered glass. The metal shrieks its protest at being dragged away. A siren wails again and the men in the white uniforms are gone. A policeman mumbles, "They never knew what hit them. . . ." as he sweeps up the broken glass. Another is sprinkling saw-dust over the bloody highway. There are skid marks which will remain for days. The flares go out—the police get into their car—a starter whines for a moment and once again the night is quiet.

Ten miles away an old farmer is awakened by the ringing of the telephone. The caller whines . . . an accident . . . the old farmer mumbles his thanks and silently hangs up the receiver. A thousand miles away a telephone rings and is answered by a portly, gray haired business man. He clutches at a chair and collapses.

Later, the telephones are used again—friends and relatives must be informed and arrangements must be made. The two old men are alone by telephones with a story that must be told.

# The Menace of Television

RON CARVER

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 11*

THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE BEGINS TO VANISH BEFORE the menacing rise of television. When this rout of thought is completed, then nothing will remain of the intellectual dignity of this nation. The appeal of the new medium is so great that it draws its supporters from every level of life. Doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers, and other such supposedly culturally advanced members of our society are just as liable to fall before the television menace as the man who drives the fruit truck for the store down the street. Television will eventually cover the nation as effectively as radio does now. When that day comes, then the softening-up attack on individual privacy (begun twenty-five years ago by commercial sound radio) will have been completed. The thought processes of men cannot at one moment entertain great thoughts and take in the offerings from the television screen.

Whatever works against the contemplative life is evil—or if this be too harsh, then call it inane or stupid. True cultural progress is only possible among those who believe in the contemplative life. And if these persons are subjected to constantly increasing invasions of the private life, then they will be drained of their strength and of their desire to continue on their chosen path. Their numbers will be decreased. Mental discipline—won over such fearful opposition—will wither away and become—even more than it is now—an object of derision. Why bother with the fuddy-duddyism of *this* discipline, cry the votaries of television, when such sweet pleasures await you, without requiring any effort of either your mind or body?

Television is evil. It destroys ideals that have taken long periods of time to gain favor. It increases the worship of the vulgar. It idealizes such men as Milton Berle, men who offer nothing worthwhile. Perhaps their slapstick comedy brings pleasure to people, and a certain amount of slapstick may be all right. But to have it in such and regular and unending flow, that is nonsensical.

As contemplation dies, so, too, do values lessen and become weakened. And when this happens, then a civilized society begins to lose its reason for being. Radio, or rather the *misuse* of radio, originated the menace to contemplative life. Television, its successor, will probably complete the task. In the light of its menace to contemplation, I can only repeat that television is an evil.

## Rhet as Writ

The coal mine shaft has been filled in to some extent by the city directors.

\* \* \*

"Life is sacred and no one has a right to limit the allotted span of another human being."

\* \* \*

"Aunts and bees are examples of natural Communists."

\* \* \*

"In this particular story he tells of a doctor giving birth to a baby by Caesarian operation."

\* \* \*

The city claims the distinction of having the shortest thermometer in the U. S.

\* \* \*

"I thought at that time the statement was very true and void."

\* \* \*

"Picasso lived with various women and was never without a practical joke."

\* \* \*

"If parents would teach their daughters the truth about sex, there would be a lot less misconception."

\* \* \*

One of the major problems I have run up against in college is the lack of mother.

\* \* \*

All in all, the new transmissions do away with a great deal of the drivers and do it better than most drivers are able to do it themselves.